



National Centre
for Writing

The Inside Story

A YEAR IN
REVIEW 2022-23

N National Centre
for Writing



Find us

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Welcome

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the National Centre for Writing's 2022/23 annual report.

2022/23 was a year of rejuvenation following the challenges of the pandemic. It has been my pleasure to see the growth of writers, literary translators, audiences, and communities over the past year. From children enjoying storytelling, a young person meeting a writer for the first time, a lifelong learner developing a new skill or a writer publishing their debut – it is a joy to see creative writing nourish collective and individual growth.

2023 is also the year we said a heartfelt thank you and goodbye to Chris Gribble. Chris moved on from his role as CEO after 17 years during which he took NCW from a start-up to the forefront of international literature.

Under new CEO Peggy Hughes, we are committed to ensuring NCW means more to the widest possible range of people in Norwich and beyond. In a changing world marked by local inequalities and international uncertainties, it is our responsibility as a cultural and civic asset to build on the connections we have made so far. I, for one, cannot wait to see how creative writing, translation and stories can continue to help us interpret, reimagine and change our world.

Alan Waters
Chair of the Board of Trustees

A thank you and acknowledgement NCW Patrons

Margaret Atwood
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Ali Smith CBE
Rose Tremain DBE



Introduction

Hello,

In these pages you'll find tales of the work delivered at the National Centre for Writing that will entertain you, that surprise you, transport, nourish and delight you. They will show you how NCW is using books, stories and writing to change lives. Our work is rooted in Norwich - England's first UNESCO City of Literature - whilst also being open to the world, connected to a global family of UNESCO creative cities.

You'll find news of the impact our work has had in the past 12 months, through programmes with young people, children and families. Through courses with older people, and an oral history project with Norwich's Bengali community. Via festivals and venues across Norwich, the UK and beyond. Through learning opportunities supporting writers to develop their craft. With workshops, podcasts, walking tours, residencies, exchanges and more. We've invited many participants and audiences and writers and translators across our thresholds, in person and digitally, and we've worked to ensure our doors will be open wider than ever before in 2024.

While we hope you'll enjoy this backwards glance, we hope too that you'll join us for our future journey. As this report will articulate, our work is only possible thanks to the engagement and support of a huge number of people - writers, translators, readers, funders, supporters, partners, volunteers, friends, neighbours, our brilliant team and board: in short, you! So, thank you.

Peggy Hughes
Chief Executive Sept 2023
Executive Director 2021-23

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MADDIE MORTIMER, WINNER OF THE DESMOND ELLIOTT PRIZE © KASHIF HAQUE

Our impact



Artists

299
ARTISTS AND PRACTITIONERS

154
NEW COMMISSIONS

28
WRITERS AND TRANSLATORS IN RESIDENCE

49
EARLY-CAREER WRITERS AND TRANSLATORS SUPPORTED

954
ARTIST EMPLOYMENT DAYS



Audiences

5,373
IN-PERSON AUDIENCES AND PARTICIPANTS

428,366
AUDIENCES TUNED INTO DIGITAL PROGRAMMES

39%
AUDIENCES FROM NORWICH

52%
AUDIENCES FROM THE EAST OF ENGLAND

11%
INTERNATIONAL AUDIENCES



Reach

2,420
DOWNLOADS OF RESOURCE PACKS

663,000
WEBSITE PAGE VIEWS

228,766
WEBSITE UNIQUE USERS

59,434
SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS

113
STORIES IN THE PRESS

21
PODCAST EPISODES

98,660
PODCAST DOWNLOADS



Learning

176
ENGAGED WITH 'A LIFE WRITTEN' FOR WRITERS AGE 70+

2,730
YOUNG PEOPLE PARTICIPATED ACROSS OUR L&P PROGRAMME

70+
PARTICIPANTS FROM NORWICH'S BENGALI COMMUNITY

25
VOLUNTEERS, WORK AND INTERN PLACEMENTS

7,282
ADULTS TOOK PART IN CREATIVE ACTIVITIES



AYOBAMI ADEBAYO © TOMIWA AJAYI



BUILD A BOOK © JO MILLINGTON



DON PATERSON



AUDIENCE AT CITY OF LITERATURE WEEKEND © THOM LAW



MAKHOLMA AND ZAHID WITH THEIR THREE KIDS © ANJALI SARKY



WILL HARRIS © MATTHEW THOMPSON

Our story: Art and audiences

The past year has seen creative writers, literary translators, poets, performers, and thinkers reconnect with one another and audiences through NCW. Whilst acknowledging the lasting personal and collective impact of the pandemic, 2022/23 has seen us deliver a refreshed series of events and activities for artists' audiences. We furthered our fully-fledged physical offer at our Literature House in the heart of Norwich, and continued to use the possibilities of digital programming to reach a national and global audience of literary lovers.

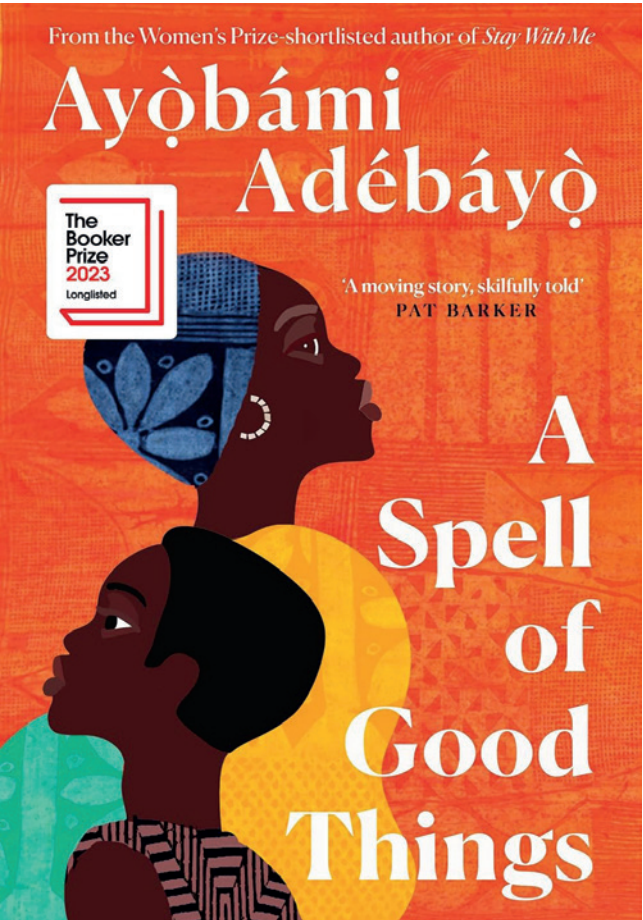
Our approach to artists, audiences and participants has been shaped by four strategic focus areas in the past year, with an overarching emphasis on how we impact

and improve the world around us, shaped by Arts Council England's Investment Principals, **Inclusivity & Relevance, Ambition & Quality, Dynamism, and Environmental Responsibility**. These are:

- **Improve societies, locally and across our region:** Be an inclusive and relevant local presence, using storytelling and writing as a force for change in Norwich and wider region through our artistic and Creative Communities programmes.
- **Creating a thriving landscape for Innovation and Collaboration:** Where those working within literature and creative writing can explore new ideas, innovate, discover, and deliver quality work. We are committed to being part of a future where creatives, artists, cross-sector thinkers and wider communities can thrive and collaborate.
- **Supporting sector resilience & solutions:** Looking outward to an everchanging literature sector and technological landscape, NCW plays our role within partnerships that steer the strategic direction of our artform in pursuit of diversity, relevance and resilience
- **Building Resilient Worlds:** Recognise the climate and environmental crises as the most significant challenge facing all of us over the next decade and beyond. We look not only to address our own impact, but how our artform and sector can drive change and solutions.

Through these strategic focus areas, we are starting to deliver our programme of work through four core pillars of work: the **Literature House, NCW Academy, Dragon Hall** and **UNESCO City of Literature** delivered through **Art, Audiences, People, Place and Communities**.

Continues...



ETIM MENTEE HAZEL EVANS



LINTON KWESI JOHNSON AT FIRST LIGHT FESTIVAL © NATIONAL CENTRE FOR WRITING



MITHU SANVAL © CAROLIN WINDEL



SIBI DATTA © JO MILLINGTON



SANDRA TAMELE - MEET THE WORLD



EMERGING TRANSLATOR MENTEEES 2022/23 © MOLLY-ROSE MEDHURST

Artist Commissions and Support

We supported **299 artists** in 2022/23. This included **154 commissions** of writing, translation, teaching and performance, culminating in **954+ employment days** for established and emerging artists from across the world. Commissions included **64** pieces of work connecting international writers to Norwich, publications and resources to support people throughout their writing journey, and **21 podcast episodes** sharing literary experiences and insights.

Acknowledging the challenges facing creatives, we increased support for emerging artists and new voices, supporting **49 early-career writers and translators** through flagship talent development programmes - Escalator and Emerging Translator Mentorships - alongside residencies, bespoke mentoring schemes and unique Early Career Awards. Celebrating authors from our region, this Award portfolio combines the visibility of a literary prize with wraparound support for writers.

We continued to celebrate the spirit of pioneering literary agent and publisher Desmond Elliott, in memory of our shared passion for discovering and nurturing emerging authors, and belief in the magic of new voices. Our **Season of Debuts** programme featured an industry day for 50 early career writers, with inspirational talks aimed at building resilience, offering solidarity, and helping attendees to plot their next steps.

We celebrated the continuation of our **Early Career Awards programme**, a suite of literary prizes designed to shine a light on debut books and first-time authors, as well as delivering crucial, wraparound support for the writers to build and encourage long-term, sustainable writing careers. At a ceremony at the October Gallery in London we announced winners of the **2022 Desmond Elliott Prize** (**Maddie Mortimer** for *Maps of Our Spectacular Bodies* who won £10,000), the **UEA New Forms Award** (**Vida Adamczewski**) and the **Laura Kinsella Fellowship** (**Cate West**). Each author benefitted from a subsidised writing residency at our Dragon Hall cottage in Norwich, plus tailored opportunities to develop their practice. We were also delighted to programme panel events for **Maddie Mortimer**, alongside her fellow Desmond Elliott Prize shortlisted authors **Luke Cassidy**

299

ARTISTS AND PRACTITIONERS

154

NEW COMMISSIONS

28

WRITERS AND TRANSLATORS IN RESIDENCE

49

EARLY-CAREER WRITERS AND TRANSLATORS SUPPORTED

'...a wonderful, creative, inspiring week. There's something really special about working in the Cottage and I shall miss it very much.' –

DESMOND ELLIOTT RESIDENT

and **Tice Cin**, at Cheltenham Literature Festival and **Cúirt International Festival of Literature** in Galway.

Our thought-provoking programme of live events was watched over by Dragon Hall's carved Baltic wood Dragon. This same custodian once presided over the sale of medieval cloths and spices. Today, she witnesses global artists exchange stories, words, and ideas in our contemporary literature house. Our programme welcomed artists from Africa, the Caribbean, Australia, Japan, and more, thanks to a range of valued longstanding and new partnerships.

The **AKO Caine Prize for African Writing** visited Norwich in an unmissable conversation between their 2022 shortlisted authors - **Joshua Chizoma**, **Hannah Giorgis**, **Nana-Ama Danquah**, **Idza Luhumyo**, and **Billie McTernan** - and award-winning author of *Stay With Me*, UEA graduate, **Ayòbámi Adébáyò**. **Celeste Mohammed**, **Canisia Lubrin**, **Barbara Jenkins**, **Karen Lord**, and **Celia Sorhaindo** formed a literary showcase of the Caribbean's most exciting contemporary voices, an evening of rich themes, ideas, conversation and food in partnership with **Bocas Lit Fest**. **Omar Musa**, Malaysian-Australian author, poet, rapper and visual artist from Queanbeyan, New South Wales, raised high our roofbeams, while poetry press **Bad Betty** toured with a cracking roster starring **Cai Draper**, **Molly Naylor**, **Kandace Siobhan Walker**, **Susanna Dickey**, **Jake Wild-Hall** and **Helen Bowell**. Soviet-Ukrainian American and French novelist and artist **Yelena Moskovich** took up residence in our cottage and delivered a stunning *Noirwich Lecture* for 2022, and NCW took up residence in **The Halls** for a special evening of **Sarah Perry** in conversation with fellow NCW Patron **Ian McEwan** about his ambitious, mesmerising novel, *Lessons*.

954+

ARTIST EMPLOYMENT DAYS

348

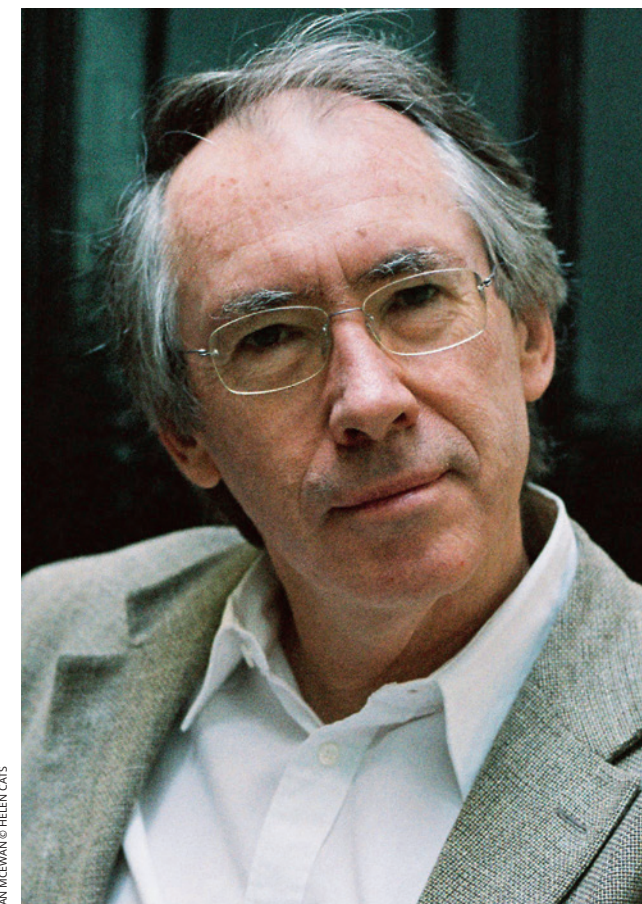
WORKSHOPS AND COURSES DELIVERED

174

EVENTS HOSTED ONLINE AND IN PERSON

31

PARTNERSHIP PROJECTS



IAN MCEWAN © HELEN CATS



EM MENTEE CAT ANDERSON



OMAR MUSA © COLE BENNETTS



DESMOND ELLIOTT PRIZE 2022, SHORTLISTED WRITERS © KASHIF HAQUE



DESMOND ELLIOTT PRIZE LONGLIST © LUKE WITCOMB



KAREN LORD © EYE ONE VISUALS. BOCAS LIT FEST WRITER, 2022.

Engaging audiences

In the past year, NCW has thrown open our physical and digital doors to audiences, readers and writers from the across the world, exploring new ideas, making new connections, and revitalising past collaborations in a changed post-pandemic world.

Many of our events returned fully in person including **London Book Fair**, **Escalator** and **Emerging Translator Mentorships** showcase events, **City of Literature Weekend** as part of **Norfolk & Norwich Festival**, and the **British Centre for Literary Translation Summer School**. Others, like the Meet the World and our **Residency programme**, were hybrid; enabling writers, readers, and participants to connect with NCW and Norwich, UNESCO City of Literature, from across the world. Combined, our

events, digital activities and resources connected with **443,751+** writers and readers.

May 2022 saw the city animated by the annual Norfolk & Norwich Festival, the 250th anniversary edition. This included our 'City of Literature' festival strand celebrating books, words, and ideas. **1,238 festival attendees** encountered the many-splendoured possibilities of the written and spoken word, kicking off with **Lewis Buxton's** funny, heart-wrenching debut poetry show 'Workout', traversing Deception Island - a pop-up replica of an Antarctic hut that transported guests through an immersive poetry, sound and film, and concluded with our inaugural '**City of Literature Publishing Fair**' at Dragon Hall, a feast of local publishing.

The Harriet Martineau Lecture, our annual UNESCO commission, was delivered by bestselling novelist, memoirist, and literary activist **Kit de Waal**, on human rights, equality, hunger and, in her words, 'compassion without judgement'. International voices such as **Mieko Kawakami** and **Ayanna Lloyd-Banwo** mingled in a programme alongside local stars **A.K. Blakemore** and **Guinevere Glasfurd**, and we took words outside with our now annual Book Hive collab, a Page Against the Machine bring your own book adventure in the Plantation Garden. Wandering Words set folk to explore Norwich of the past, present and future, map in hand through five brilliant new commissioned poems.



WORKOUT LEWIS BUXTON



GUINEVERE GLASFURD © STEFANO MASSE



AYANNA LLOYD BANWO



HARRIET MARTINEAU LECTURE © MILLINGTON



WANDERING WORDS © JO MILLINGTON



MIKIO KAWAKAMI © RETO TOYAMA



WANDERING WORDS © JO MILLINGTON



CITY OF LITERATURE PUBLISHING FAIR © JO MILLINGTON

Courses, workshops and resources

This year we continued to work with award-winning tutors to deliver high quality, genre-focused 12 and 18-week tutored online courses, designed in partnership with the UEA. In total 28 courses ran across the year with **300 students**, from Fiction Writing with **Ashley Hickson-Lovence** to Memoir Writing with **Chitra Ramaswamy**. Alongside this our growing programme of half-day workshops and short courses, with highlights including Writing Food and Place with **Nina Myinga Powles** and Experimenting With Fiction led by **Jarred McGinnis**.

Behind the scenes, the year was spent developing and preparing our new NCW Academy to be launched

in summer 2023. NCW Academy draws together the previously separate elements of our adult learning offer (courses, workshops, mentoring and more) under one name, a home for creative writers and those inspired to write, providing structure and support to achieve their writing goals. NCW Academy is committed to flexible and accessible opportunities for writers at all stages in their writing journey, with a diverse range of resources. We offered bursary placements, in person and digital platforms, self-paced and tutor led, free to download, payment plans and pay what you can options across the full range of our programme.

This year we have commissioned new self-paced courses for our collection of low cost or free to access content from How to Write Unreliable Narrators - **Hannah Vincent**, to How to Write YA Fiction: Characters and Conflicts - **Chelsey Flood** and How to Write True Crime - **Sonia Faleiro**. The **Writing Life** Podcast produced 21 episodes with over 98,000 downloads this year and listeners from **183 countries**. Episodes had a series of hosts from NCW team with a range of guests invited to talk about the craft and industry of writing from 'How to structure a novel' with Ian Nettleton, 'How to balance story and plot' by Escalator mentor **Ashley Hickson-Lovence**, Special guest Mohsin Hamid on *The Last White Man*, building a writing routine with **Megan Bradbury**, the art of 'hooking' your readers from **Julia Crouch**, **Kirsty Logan** on witchcraft, self-publishing, video game writing, translating neurodivergence and much more, all capped with the recording of **Kit De Waal's** Harriet Martineau Lecture.

Alongside this exciting delivery, our team worked tirelessly to ensure NCW is fit for the future. We developed a new website and a new digital content platform 'Writing Hub' for presenting our collection of work to better engage with readers, writers and translators, alongside capital development at our Grade I Listed Literature House, paving the way to open Dragon Hall, Norwich's heritage, and the world of literature to a greater range of visitors in years to come.



KIT DE WAAL © SARAH M LEE



WORKSHOP IN THE GREAT HALL © ANDI SAPEY



SEASON OF DEBUTS, WRITERS DEVELOPMENT DAY © ANDI SAPEY



BILLIE MCTERNAN © OGHOBGE OMONBLANK OMONHININ



YAN GE, HOW TO WRITE FICTION TUTOR © KEN CHEN



HANNAH GEORGES © ABBARA ADHONM



SEASON OF DEBUTS, WRITERS DEVELOPMENT DAY © ANDI SAPEY

Residencies

We reopened our in-person residencies at Dragon Hall in 2022/23, welcoming 13 writers and translators to Norwich, alongside sustaining wider international connections through 15 Virtual Residencies.

From across Europe, our residents included three writers from **Flanders**, **Ukrainian-American** writer Yelena Moskovich, and translators from **Albania** and **North Macedonia**. Closer to home, we offered short residencies to **UK-based writers** – Vida Adamczewski, Maddie Mortimer, Cate West – as part of the Early Career Awards.

We strengthened links with East Asia, offering residencies and collaboration opportunities to artists from **Japan**, **Singapore** and **South Korea**. Japanese author Mieko Kawakami undertook a residency during our City of Literature Weekend as part of Norfolk & Norwich Festival, and photographer Tomiyasu Hayahisa in collaboration with Modern Culture and SISJAC. The Literature Translation Institute of Korea supported residencies for translators Clare Richards and Soobin Kim, both published by Strangers Press, whilst Arts Council of Korea supported writer Shin Jung Keun to spend a month in Norwich.

We welcomed three writers from Flanders – Sylvie Marie, Els Beerten and Amarylis De Gryse – as part of our ongoing exchange with Passa Porta house of literature. Anxhela Çikopano from Albania and Marija Girevska from North Macedonia spent a month in Norwich as part of the Translation in Motion project led by RECIT and co-funded by the Creative Europe programme of the European Union.

‘I’ve gained a greater confidence, which has driven me to rethink my goals as a writer – to broaden the scope of my work and possibilities of its reach’ – WAYNE REE, RESIDENT, 2023

Our **Visible Communities** programme offered 9 residencies presenting underrepresented voices, widening routes into literary translation for UK-based translators and connecting to diaspora language. Residents included four early career literary translators – Adrija Ghosh, Nadiyah Abdullatif, Dawid Mobolaji and Arthur Reiji Morris.

All our residencies result in commissions and events. These span reflections on Norwich in our Imagining the City and Walking Norwich series, and interrogations of the experience of international artists through provocative Meet the World events online and in-person. Residents are popular guests at Dragon Hall Socials, sharing knowledge and experience with local writers and creatives.



Across our programme of residencies and exchanges, NCW seeks to provide opportunities for new voices and perspectives on writing and translation. In June 2022, we proudly launched *Violent Phenomena: 21 Essays on Translation*, in partnership with Titled Axis Press. This featured thought-provoking contributions from many writers supported by NCW. ‘Inventive and thought-provoking... timely and impressive’ — ABC News.



SHAGUFTA SHARMEEN-TANIA THUMB



SHEN JUNG KEUN



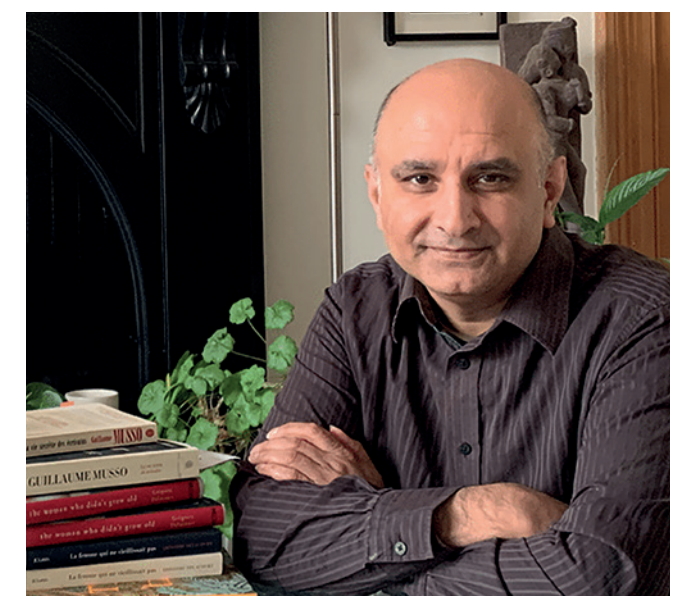
DAWID MOBOLAJI AND SEAN GASPER BYE



DRAGON HALL COTTAGE © HANNAH HUTCHINS



SOOBIN KIM BY KATE GRIFFIN



VINEET LAL

Creative people, places and communities



ur Literature House is open to all who live, work, study in or visit Norwich; a hub for all to create, get involved and share stories. Beyond our campus, our growing outreach programme works in and with communities across the East of England, with a particular focus on Norfolk and Norwich.

Whether at Dragon Hall or beyond, our 'Creative People' programme connects with individuals, community groups, schools, arts organisations, and charities to ensure that everyone can experience the transformative power of creative writing and storytelling.

Children, Young People & Families

Research leaves no doubt that increased confidence with words and ideas supports enjoyment and attainment throughout education. To harness this, our work with children and young people aims to nurture a love of creativity, words and writing from an early age.

- Through activities unfolding in schools and beyond, we engaged **2,730 children and young people**, employing **25 artists** to work directly with young people.
- Family-friendly activities for young children introduced poetry, storytelling and hands-on making in joyous ways, often drawing on the magic of Dragon Hall.
- **Half-term holiday activities** for older children explored zines, gaming, sci-fi and the natural world, opening young minds to new ideas through prose, poetry and performance.
- Our creative development **Lit From the Inside** group of **10 young people** took part in **11 sessions**, reconnecting with writers and creatives in-person to gain valuable insights and experience of how the creative industries work, and publishing their own zine.

Continues..

'My confidence has really increased. I have come out of Lit From the Inside with many new life skills' -

LIT FROM THE INSIDE PARTICIPANT



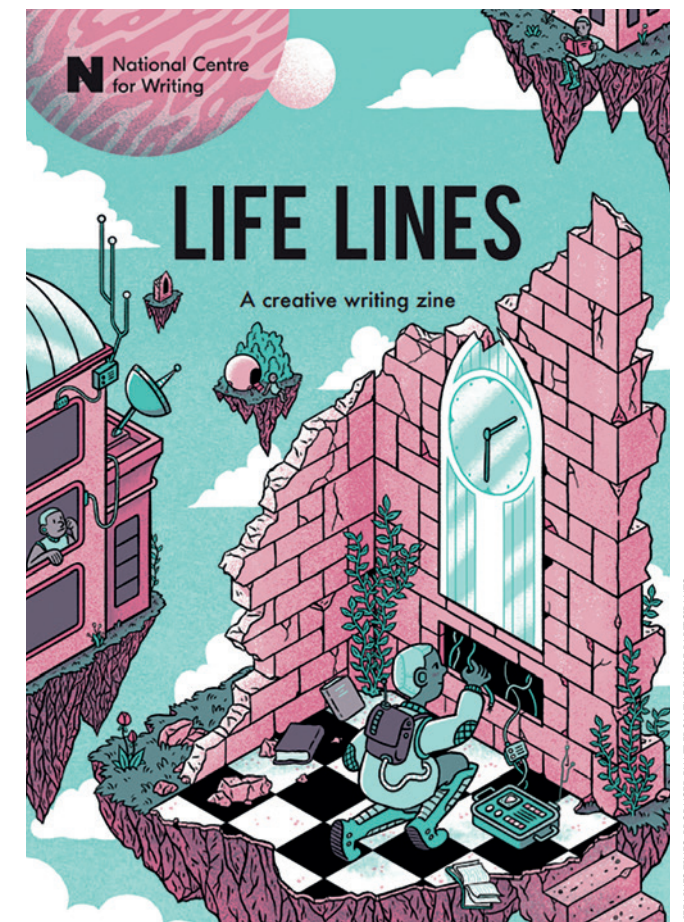
BUILDBOOK © JO MELLINGTON



NORWICH'S BENGALI COMMUNITY © ANDI SARPEY



NEW ROUTES



LIFE LINES ZINES, PRODUCED BY LIT FROM THE INSIDE PARTICIPANTS

Schools, Colleges and Learning Institutes

From primary school workshops to university work placements, NCW engaged over **51 schools** and learning institutes across Norfolk and beyond, with **339 young writers** entering our annual Norfolk Writing Competition and regular school visits to Dragon Hall.

We extended our partnership with the Stephen Spender Trust to bring Multilingual Creators translation workshops to middle schools in Norfolk and Suffolk working with teachers and students. We look forward to extending this work to West Norfolk in 2023/24 and beyond.

We had **7 work placements and interns** with our partnership with the University of East Anglia working with a range of undergraduates, alongside 5 students and tutors from Access Creative College in Norwich.

In the Community

We co-curated storytelling activities with **New Routes**, empowering **125+ Refugees and Asylum Seekers** to build confidence with spoken and written English and increase a sense of belonging in Norwich through connecting with our shared heritage.

Our **Stories From the Quarter** programme, made possible by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, continued to connect **170+ Bengali and Sylheti speakers** to explore Norwich's heritage and share their own stories.

Dragon Hall Heritage Volunteers continued to offer informed and insightful heritage tours of Dragon Hall and its place in Medieval Norwich to visitors, alongside being a vital resource for the heritage of the building and its role in Norwich's social and economic history. Dragon Hall Volunteers have their own heritage, a dedicated website with a wealth of history and information about the building. <https://www.dragonhallnorwich.org.uk/>

Wellbeing & Connection

Writing, reading and sharing stories are powerful catalysts for individual wellbeing and collective connection. Our life writing programme for over 70s, **A Life Written**, engaged **176 people**. This invaluable course supports older writers to reconnect with creativity, and develop new friendships and confidence.

To ensure Dragon Hall is open and accessible we host free **monthly 'Socials'** for the creative community in Norwich with **200+ people** participating this year. Working alongside our Heritage Volunteers there have been **10 heritage tours** and **3 open days** of heritage and literary activity.

'I came away from each session feeling uplifted and thrilled at the creativity in these girls. Their confidence and their self-esteem was notable and impressive...' –

NEW ROUTES YOUTH COORDINATOR

'So pleased to have work linked to the [Bengali] communities children are from - it is so important for our children to see themselves represented' –

TEACHER, ON 'STORIES FROM THE QUARTER' WORKSHOP

'It has boosted my confidence in speaking out as well as writing. The group is supportive, and I feel part of a new community - less alone. Maybe even more ambitious in my expectations of myself.' –

A LIFE WRITTEN PARTICIPANT



CREATIVE QUARTER NORWICH - VISITNORWICH - (90) CREDIT VISITNORWICH



NEW ROUTES

Norwich UNESCO City of Literature

Norwich's UNESCO City of Literature status provides a vital local and global platform for the work of NCW, placing our city within a vibrant international network. Building on Norwich's rich literary past, NCW and the writers we work with bring big ideas into civic conversation, sparking social change and the public imagination.

In 2022/23, Norwich celebrated 10 years as part of the Cities of Literature network. In this anniversary year, we worked alongside city and regional civic leads to explore shared cultural strategy and the UNESCO Sustainable Development Goals, as well as collaborative events, commissions and even a trail of 'book benches'. The next chapter has now started!

One such collaboration was our annual commission with Norwich City Council to mark Norwich's Living Wage Week. In 2022, we commissioned poet Shannon Clinton Copeland, who delivered a powerful piece titled 'Cinema Ticket'.

Need goes in the washing machine
with a spoonful of Vanish and an inquiry.
It has not been clean for years – used
to sop up watered milk, I can still see
the war in it, the final portcullis
of a shopping basket. It is time to refresh.

A mother will not weep for the cost
of a cinema ticket. It will not be
bread, butter / young life for her daughter.

The mad hunt for stability wanes.
This place has good light and at night,
she no longer weighs unreal wages in
tired hands on Indeed.

Need comes out of the machine. It looks
very real, pretty clean. She switches on the light
to admire the colour, for once
does not worry about its cost relative
to a basket of goods, to a week of
food. Work, now, is different.

Like a magic trick, click – from something dark
to something ... good.

Beyond Norwich, we outwardly shared best practices, explored new ideas, and showcased Norwich globally at the annual UNESCO Cities of Literature conference in Melbourne, 2022. This global network creates opportunities for Norwich-based writers to participate in international projects and exchanges. Daisy Henwood was among five writers selected for a virtual residency from Melbourne City of Literature. Paired with Werribee River Association, Daisy created a series of poetic reflections on rivers in Norwich and Melbourne. This included Wensum River (after Jack Cooper), a piece that speaks to the cycle of time gone by and future hopes held within a river.

www.nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk/writing-hub/following-three-rivers

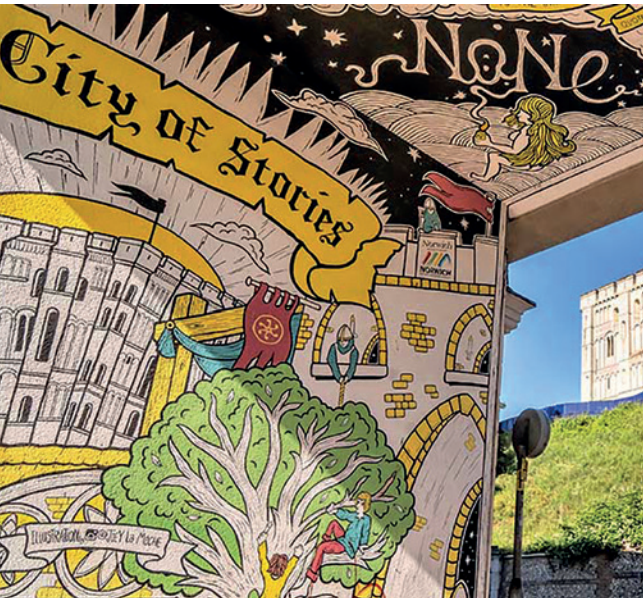
Wensum River after Jack Cooper

I like how the lights
of the Playhouse garden
bounce Christmas
onto the winter water
and how the troubadour
on the bridge sings us
into the old city walls,
but mostly I like the swans
that shout across the banks
and raise their babies
by the old printing factory
and how the dogs that walk
along the old railway line know
to give the goslings space

A UNESCO City of Literature celebrates its past. However, it is equally vital that we create the conditions for a diverse and thriving contemporary ecosystem. In this spirit, NCW were delighted to partner with the **British Archive for Contemporary Writing at UEA** in 'New Ways of Collecting, Collaborating and Curating: Towards a Centre for Contemporary Poetry in the Archive'. Funded by the Mellon Foundation, this project pioneers a radical new approach to archiving. Working with poets **Anthony Vahni Capildeo, Jay Bernard, Joelle Taylor** and **Gail McConnell**, NCW and UEA aim to promote and preserve the archives of poets of colour, LGBTQ+ poets and others from underrepresented backgrounds or practices. Connecting archivists and authors, we put Norfolk at the heart of research into the diversity of poetry, developing digital preservation methods that help to safeguard this literary heritage for future generations.

Finally, events, projects and collaborations are delivered across the city by our partners and friends - festivals, conversations, performances and more, in libraries, bookshops, pubs and cafés – manifest daily our city's vibrant literary community. They ensure Norwich has a rich cultural mix: a great place to be a reader or a writer.

- A City of Literature
- A City of Readers
- A City of Writers
- A City of Translators
- A City of Stories
- A City of Ideas
- A City of Books
- A City of People
- A City of Words
- A City of Communities



Financial resilience and income

In 2022, we were delighted to receive news that NCWriting will remain part of **Arts Council England's National Portfolio 2023-26**, securing our work for the next three years. Furthermore, we secured generous grants from **Arts Council England's Capital Investment Programme** and the **Wolfson Foundation** in 2022. This has enabled improved access to Dragon Hall for wheelchair and pushchair users, new community drop-in spaces, a forthcoming shop, and restored key heritage assets. Simultaneously, we upgraded digital capacities to grow, and better serve, online audiences with support from **New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership Growth Fund**. We closed 2023 by securing a **Heritage Lottery Fund** grant of £103,453 to support our current 'Stepping into Dragon Hall' programme. These generous funders ensure that NCW is a literature house fit for the future.

Across 2022/23, Arts Council England income was supplemented by other core stakeholder funds from **Norwich City Council, Norfolk County Council and University of East Anglia**. (55% of our total funds). We are grateful to these founding partner funders for their commitment.

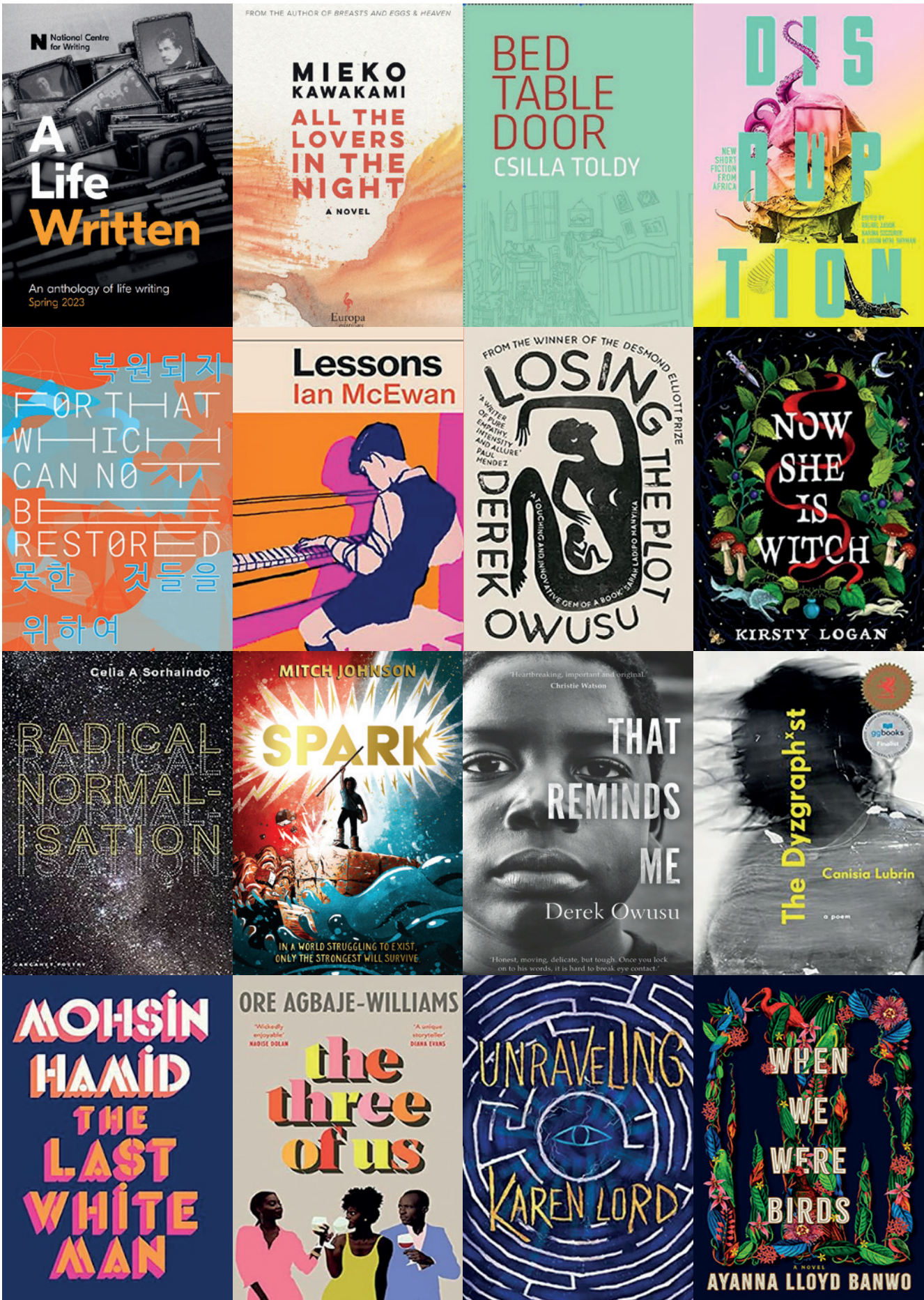
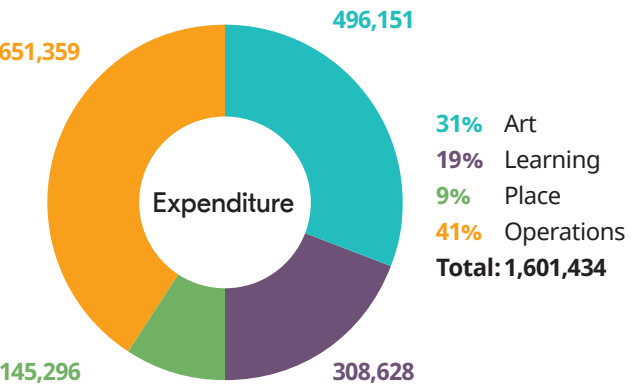
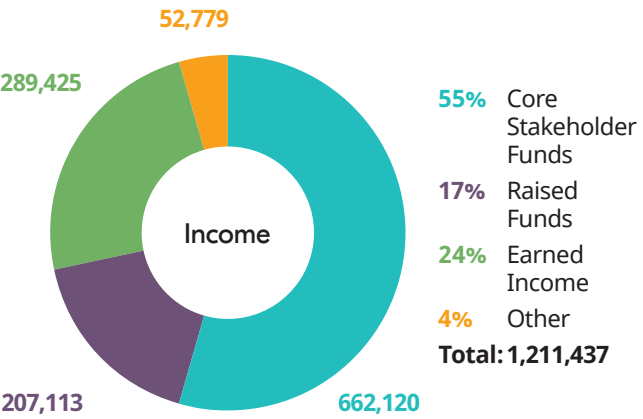
Commercial Activity continued a strong recovery post-pandemic, establishing Dragon Hall as one of Norwich's finest event destinations. Our hires allow individuals, businesses, charities, and partners to access historic space. This provides invaluable support for our artistic

activities and the maintenance of Dragon Hall itself. Raised Funds include grants, partnership income and other strategic funds. Earned Income is income from fundraising, ticket sales, NCW Academy and trading activities.

60% of our expenditure was connected to delivering artistic and learning programmes. 'Place' relates to the cost of local and regional programmes. 41% of expenditure relates to operational costs. NCW is proud to be a **Real Living Wage** employer.

To thrive in a post-pandemic world impacted by the cost of living crisis, we are working to reduce the gap between income and expenditure. We are making good progress to achieve this in 2024/25: **Commercial Activity** has exceeded annual targets at the time of writing. 'NCW Academy' is a competitive commercial offer with room to grow. We have an **expanded Development team** and aspire to **increase annual footfall by 43%** in 2024, creating new commercial opportunities. Finally, a **revamped website** will continue to develop our online audiences.

As a not-for-profit organisation, NCW ensures that its funds are used to fund 40+ varied programmes in support of our charitable purpose. Across operations, NCW is committed to reducing our environmental impact and working within Arts Council England 'Julie's Bicycle' commitments. Where suitable, we use our programme as a forum to discuss the climate crisis.



Development, funders and partners

To every donor, supporter, funder, partner, and stakeholder, thank you. You have supported writers, translators, and communities to experience the joy of creating with words.

We wish to extend a special thank you to individuals in our community who lend their support to NCW. Our **Supporters Circle** members give transformative annual gifts to support new voices and stories, ensuring the writers of tomorrow get the support they need to thrive and tell their story. Meanwhile, **volunteers** remain essential to Community programming and providing access to Dragon Hall through inspiring tours and open days. Finally, thank you to those that made online or in-venue donations.

‘NCW is a place of magic. It spells reaching out to schools and communities, animating a love of book, poetry and literature, a significant part of the cultural life of the city. It supports economic growth and personal wellbeing. It is what makes Norwich special. The reach is local, national and global, NCW has enriched my life and the lives of many others. I am proud to support it’ –

LAURA MCGILLIVRAY, NCW SUPPORTERS CIRCLE

Local and national grantmakers support our ‘Creative People’ programme, with generous donors including **The Paul Bassham Charitable Trust, Anguish’s Educational Foundation** and **The Linbury Trust** among many others. International partnership and funding agreements underpin our programme of residencies and translation mentorships. We are particularly grateful to **The Jan Michalski Foundation, British Council** and **Francis W Reckitt Arts Trust** for their longstanding support.

Partnerships

Collaborations and co-creation are at the core of our values, business model and programming. Our achievements are only possibly due to the passion, generosity, and expertise of our **71+ UK and international partners**. Here in Norwich, they include **University of East Anglia, Young Norfolk Arts**, and **Norfolk & Norwich Festival**. Across the UK, we have worked with the **Laura Kinsella Foundation, Poetry Translation Centre**, fellow **Regional Literature Development Agencies**, and multiple publishers. International partners stretch across every continent through the **UNESCO Creative Cities Network, ICORN, London Book Fair** and **British Council**.

Escalator: Our Campaign to Support New Writers

Each year, Escalator supports 8-12 diverse emerging writers from the East of England through mentoring, masterclasses, showcases and more. This well-established programme is well respected in the publishing sector, with over 50% of writers supported being published. ‘Escalator is all about saying ‘yes’, to diversity, inclusivity, to championing every kind of writer at all stages of their career’ – Jon Ransom, Escalator writer

In 2022/23, Escalator was funded by Arts Council England, Amazon Literary Partnership and generous individual donors to the ‘Escalator Needs Your Help’ public campaign.



ESCALATOR SHOWCASE © OILY HILL



EAST ANGLIAN BOOK AWARDS 2022 © JARROLD



LYNNE BRYAN, WINNER OF THE EAST ANGLIAN BOOK AWARD 2022 © JARROLD




ESCALATOR WRITERS AND NCW STAFF © JO MILLINGTON



DRAGON HALL © JANNAH HUTCHINS

Our future

 ur strategic focus areas are shaping our work and ambitions, and 2023-26 will see major national programmes developed, ambitious programming and the launch of **‘Stepping Into Dragon Hall’**. This is our **Arts Council England, Wolfson Foundation, Heritage Lottery Fund, Geoffrey Watling Charity and other local trusts funded** project combining capital development for improved access, some urgent restoration, a new visitor front entrance and welcome space, extended garden access and visitor heritage experience.

This will be completed in Summer 2024 with the reopening of Dragon Hall to visitors, a new writer’s room and a programme of work for creative communities, collaboration, discovery and national conversations. This major development for our Literature House was created from the learning following the combined impacts of a global pandemic, reopening post Covid, Brexit and the ongoing cost of living and energy crisis on our audiences and communities, alongside the increasing need to reconnect people and communities to improve social wellbeing. We envisage a thriving creative space at the heart of the local community, from which we will explore with local and global audiences the myriad of ways in which storytelling changes lives.

We will change the story by having a deeper understanding of our audience’s priorities and the role NCW can play in impacting long-term change. We will change the story by focusing on increased representation in literature, and we will help change the story by being a thriving creative centre of national and international significance outside of the capital.

We envisage a thriving creative space at the heart of the local community, from which we will explore with local and global audiences the myriad of ways in which storytelling changes lives



Thank you

We are incredibly thankful to all our donors, supporters, partners and stakeholders; without their ongoing support our work would be significantly reduced and, in many cases, not exist.

Founding Partners

Arts Council England
Norwich City Council
Norfolk County Council
University of East Anglia

Stepping Into Dragon Hall (2022 – 2024)

Arts Council England
National Lottery Heritage Fund
The Wolfson Foundation
Norwich Freeman’s Charity
The Geoffrey Watling Charity
2016 Anne French Memorial Trust
The Lady Hind Trust

Project Funders

Arts Award Access Fund
Amazon Literary Partnership
Anglian Ruskin University
Anguish’s Educational Foundation
Arts Council Korea
Authors’ Licensing & Collecting Society
British Council
British Centre for Literary Translation
Creative Europe Programme, European Union
Danish Arts Foundation
Educational Foundation of Alderman John Norman
Elizabeth Kostova Foundation
EUNIC London
Francis W Reckitt Arts Trust
The D’Oyly Carte Charitable Trust
The Desmond Elliott Trust
The Francis W Reckitt Arts Trust
The Royal Norwegian Embassy
Garrick Charitable Trust
Golsoncott Foundation
Harvill Secker
Institut français
Institut Ramon Llull
Italian Cultural Institute
Japan Foundation
Jan Michalski Foundation
Latvian Literature
Laura Kinsella Foundation
l’Entente de développement culturel entre le gouvernement du Québec et la Ville de Québec
Literature Translation Institute of Korea
Literature Wales
Lithuanian Cultural Embassy
Lithuanian Culture Institute
The Martineau Society
The Malcolm Bradbury Trust

Mellon Foundation
National Arts Council of Singapore
National Lottery Heritage Fund
National Museum of Taiwan Literature
New Anglia Small Grant Scheme (part funded by European Regional Development Fund)
Norwich Consolidated Charities
Norfolk County Council
Norwegian Embassy
Norwegian Literature Abroad
Norwich Business Improvement District
Norwich City Council
Norfolk Community Foundation
PACCAR Foundation
The Paul Bassham Charitable Trust
PEACH West Norfolk
PEN Translates
Polish Cultural Institute, London
Pro-Helvetia
Québec Government Office in London
Royal
Ramon Llull Institute
Russian Institute for Literary Translation
Sainsbury Institute for the Study of Japanese Arts and Cultures
The Saroj Lal Mentorship
Sheikh Zayed Book Award
The Society of Authors
Suffolk County Council
Swedish Arts Council
Taipei Representative Office in London
Sylvia Waddilove Foundation
Waseda University
Welsh Literature Exchange
The Yanai Initiative for Globalizing Japanese Humanities at UCLA and Waseda University

The 2023 BCLT summer school

Arts Council England | British Council UK/
Ukraine Season | Danish Arts Foundation |
Dutch Foundation for Literature | Goethe-
Institut | Literature Translation Institute
of Korea | National Museum of Taiwan
Literature | NORLA | Ministry of Culture,
Taiwan | Poetry Translation Centre | Pro
Helvetia | Sheikh Zayed Book Award |
The Yanai Initiative | Seagull Books

Thank you to our major capital funders who transformed Writer’s Centre Norwich to the National Centre for Writing in 2018.

FCC Communities Foundation | The Fidelity UK Foundation | The Foyle Foundation | Garfield Weston Foundation | The Geoffrey Watling Charity | New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership | The Norwich Freeman’s Charity | The Trusthouse Charitable Foundation | Wolfson Foundation

NCW Supporters’ Circle

Briony Bax | Jim Johnston | Caroline McCormick | Laura McGillivray | The Passingham Family | Jane and David Steward, and those who wish to remain anonymous.

Partners

Eastern Daily Press
English PEN
Literature Across Frontiers
London Book Fair
Jarrold
Norwich Research Park
RECIT
Strangers Press
The Literary Consultancy
Translators Association

UNESCO Cities of Literature Network

Angoulême | Baghdad | Barcelona | Beirut | Bremen | Buffalo City | Bucheon | Dublin | Dunedin | Durban | Edinburgh | Exeter | Gothenburg | Granada | Heidelberg Hobart | Iasi | Iowa Jakarta | Kozhikode | Kraków | Kuhmo | Kutaisi | Lahore | Leeuwarden Lillehammer | Ljubljana | Lviv | Lyon | Manchester | Melbourne | Milan | Montevideo | Nanjing | Norwich | Nottingham | Óbidos | Odessa | Okayama | Prague | Québec City | Reykjavik | Rio de Janeiro | Seattle | Slemani | Taif | Tartu | Tukums | Ulyanovsk | Utrecht | Vilnius | Wonju | Wrocław

Our Team

A warm thank you to the dedicated team of local staff, trustees and volunteers.

We extend special gratitude to the Dragon Hall Heritage Volunteers for their support for the conservation of Dragon Hall’s heritage, local research, and enlightening public tours.



MICHAEL PEDERSON - C. MICHAEL PEDERSON